

Report on International conference on Mirza Ghalib: A Pillar of Indo Persian Society

Institute of Indo-Persian Studies, New Delhi in collaboration with the Asiatic Society, Kolkata organized a two-day International conference on Mirza Ghalib: A Pillar of Indo Persian Society on the 220th birth anniversary year of the poet. Scholars from USA, Canada, Iran, Bangladesh and various parts of India participated in the conference. Dr. Syed Akhtar Husain, the President of the Institute of Indo-Persian Studies introduced the theme of the conference on 4th January 2017 at ICCR, Kolkata. Prof. Ahmed Karimi Hakkak delivered the keynote address and Dr. Satyabrata Chakraborty, General Secretary, the Asiatic Society welcomed the guests and Shri Sitaram Sharma inaugurated the international conference. Prof. Isha Mahammad, President of the Asiatic Society, presided over the inaugural session of the conference.

On 5th January 2017 the rest of the academic sessions and valedictory session were held at the Vidyasagar Hall of the Asiatic Society. Ms. Kamna Prasad, founder *Jashn-e-Bahar Foundation*, delivered the valedictory address and Prof. Subhash Ranjan Chakraborty, Vice President of the Asiatic Society presided over the session. Dr. Mahmood Alam, General Secretary, IIPS proposed the vote of thanks. Thirty papers on various aspects of the life, times and poetry of Ghalib were presented in the five academic sessions of the two-day conference. The event was sponsored by ICCR, Hamdard, the Luxe Café, Newsd, Himalaya, India Afghan Afghan Foundation, Sahitya Akademy and Ministry of Minority Affairs, Govt. of India. Ghalib had visited Calcutta in 1828 in connection with his pension case. During his stay, he had penned lively sketches of Calcutta both in his Persian and Urdu poetry and letters. His stay in the city of joy was commemorated in the conference. The scholars presented Ghalib an elegant man who cared for humanity cutting across narrow barriers of cast, creed and colour. He has carved a niche for Urdu and Indo Persian literature in world literature. His Persian poetry, diary and letters outnumber his Urdu literary output. However, the chief fame of Ghalib rests over his slim volume of 235 Urdu ghazals and speaking letters. Nonetheless, there is a literary craftsmanship of Ghalib in his Persian writings which constitute a bridge between India and the Persian speaking societies all over the world. The popularity of Ghalib in India and abroad owes much to his single volume of his Urdu ghazals. IIPS has made an endeavor to introduce Ghalib's Persian works among the people of Kolkata by the scholars from India and abroad. The conference was interdisciplinary and was successfully hosted by the organizers.

Various aspects of Ghalib's life and work were emanated by the scholars participated in the conference. Scholars like Prof. Ahmad Karimi Hakkak and Matthew Thomas Miller emphasized on the need of an extensive and detailed research on the mechanism and technique of expressing ideas in the prose and poetry of Ghalib along with his life history. Shri Sitaram Sharma felt an Institute to be established in Kolkata which could carry on more such research and academic activities on Ghalib.